

Relative Abundance, Migratory Timing, and Overwintering and Spawning Distribution of Steelhead in the Copper River Drainage Study 05-502

Radio telemetry methods are currently being used to determine the majority of steelhead *Oncorhynchus mykiss* spawning locations, the stock-specific run timing profiles, and the magnitude of the total return to the Upper Copper River (tributaries north of the Chugach Mountains). Steelheads were captured with a fish wheel and dip nets in the main stem Copper River below Wood Canyon. A total of 59 steelhead were captured and 52 were fitted with radio tags from 15 August to 6 October 2005. Radio-tagged fish were tracked in early November 2005 and will be tracked again in April and May 2006 using a combination of ground-based receiving stations and aerial tracking techniques. Initial locations of radio-tagged steelhead in the Upper Copper River were in the main stem Copper, Chitina, Tazlina, and Gulkana rivers. Final aerial surveys in April and May 2006 will provide the required information to estimate the spawning distribution and run timing of the steelhead stocks in the Upper Copper River.

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